
Transportation Committee

HB 2223

Brief Description: Exempting applicants who operate commercial motor vehicles for agribusiness purposes from certain commercial driver's license requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Clibborn, Johnson and Morrell.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Exempts applicants for a commercial driver's license who operate a commercial motor vehicle for agribusiness purposes from the requirement of either successfully completing a course of instruction in the operation of a commercial motor vehicle or being certified by an employer as having the skills and training necessary to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle in order to obtain a commercial driver's license.

Hearing Date: 2/24/09

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315)

Background:

The operation of commercial motor vehicles is regulated under both state and federal law. In order to operate a commercial motor vehicle in Washington, a person generally must hold a commercial driver's license with the applicable endorsements for the vehicle he or she is driving.

However, this requirement does not apply to the following persons:

- a firefighter or law enforcement officer operating emergency equipment who has completed an approved driver training course;
- the operator of a recreational vehicle used for noncommercial purposes; or
- the operator of a farm vehicle controlled and operated by a farmer. The vehicle itself must also be used to transport agricultural products, farm machinery, or farm supplies to or from a farm. Finally, the vehicle may not be used in the operations of a common or contract motor carrier, and it must be used within 150 miles of the person's farm.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

To receive a commercial driver's license from the State of Washington, an applicant must be a resident of the state, pass knowledge and skills tests that comply with minimum federal standards, and successfully complete a course of instruction in the operation of a commercial motor vehicle that has been approved by the Director of the Department of Licensing (DOL) or be certified by an employer as having the skills and training necessary to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle.

The DOL may waive the requirement for instruction in the operation of a commercial motor vehicle for an applicant that has been issued a valid commercial driver's license in another state and is transferring to Washington.

Summary of Bill:

Applicants for a commercial driver's license who operate a commercial motor vehicle for agribusiness purposes are exempted from the requirement of either successfully completing a course of instruction in the operation of a commercial motor vehicle that has been approved by the Director of the DOL or being certified by an employer as having the skills and training necessary to safely operate a commercial motor vehicle in order to obtain a commercial driver's license.

Agribusiness is defined for purposes of the exemption described above as a private carrier who in the normal course of business primarily transports:

- farm machinery, farm equipment, and other materials used in farming;
- agricultural inputs such as seeds, feed, fertilizers, and crop protection products; or
- unprocessed agricultural commodities, which are defined as plants or parts of plants, animals, or animal products, produced by farmers, ranchers, vineyardists or orchardists.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.